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ABSTRACT

A 38-item questionnaire designed to collect data on 5 career anchors (security, technical/functional competence, managerial competence, creativity, and autonomy) and 3 career drives (identity, service, and variety) was administered to 153 rural educators in eastern-central Utah. Using a factor analytic approach to ascertain the internal validity of the questionnaire, the results indicate that the individual items designed to measure the eight career orientations, for the most part, clustered together. One major exception was observed. For the security variable, the analysis suggests that the items were measuring two different security variables: (1) two items emphasized the part of security which concerns itself with remaining in a certain geographical location as opposed to moving employment location, and (2) another factor had high coefficients which corresponded to items emphasizing stability, benefits, and good retirement. Although two career orientations had relatively high coefficients under both groupings (identity and service), one grouping fell under a multifaceted approach to teaching (managerial competence, autonomy, variety, and creativity) and the other grouping had technical competence and security as their central career orientations. Analysis suggests that managerial interests and technical competence are on polar extremes, and that educational organizations need to appreciate differences between teachers. (AH)

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A CAREER DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE OF RURAL EDUCATORS AND CAREER DECISION-MAKING

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INTRODUCTION

"I know that I will remain in teaching for a long time. It has nothing to do with whether I enjoy teaching or not. I simply like the autonomy I have as an educator."

The aforementioned statement represents a recurring theme for many educators today. More and more educators are asking career-related questions which have an impact on educational organizations and individual teachers as well. The following paper discusses a current research effort which investigated the career orientations of a representative sample of rural educators in Utah. The paper is based on the theory of career anchors. Few researchers have studied the career decision-making of teachers based on current career development theories. This paper introduces the questionnaire used in the data collection process and discusses the implications of the results for the rural educator.

BACKGROUND

In the past decade there has been an influx of information appearing in books, guides, and journals concerning careers and career development. As more and more educators contemplate their careers and make subsequent career decisions, an ever increasing need has arisen for new and logical models of career development to assist the educator. One model which has drawn considerable attendtion is the "career anchor" model created by Dr. Edgar Schein of M.I.T.

Schein (1978) suggests that certain motivational/talent/value drives formed through work experience, function to guide and constrain entire careers. These basic combinations of needs, drives, and self image,

act, in effect, as "career anchors" that not only influence career choices, but also effect decisions to move from one job to another, shape what the individual is looking for in life, and color his/her views of the future. Schein suggested that although we continue through life to gain valuable data about ourselves in regard to our behavior, the first three to five years of work experience are particularly important for our career development and provide the groundwork for future career decisions.

Schein collected longitudinal data over a ten year period using interviewing as the central mechanism for data collection. Through his interview process five central career drives emerged:

1: Security. Individuals with security as their anchor have tied their careers to a particular organization. The implications are that individuals who are "security" oriented will accept to a greater degree than the other career anchor types, an organizational definition of their careers.

2: Technical/Functional Competence. Technical/functional people are motivated by the challenge of the actual work they do, e.g., marketing, curriculum design, public relations or some specific educational expertise. Their anchor is the technical field, functional area, or content of their work, not the managerial process itself.

3: Managerial Competence. The fundamental basis for the "managerial competence" anchor is to be competent in the complex activities that comprise the idea of "management." "Managerial competence" oriented individuals perceive that their talents lie in the ability to analyze problems, remain emotionally stable, and interpersonally competent.

4: Creativity. "Creative" anchored individuals have a need to create something on their own. "Creating" is the fundamental need operating for example, in the entrepreneur. "Creative" oriented individuals keep getting into new ventures and trying their hand at new kinds of projects.

5: Autonomy. The "autonomy" anchor encompasses those who have found organizational life to be restrictive, irrational and/or intrusive into their lives. They are primarily concerned about their own sense of freedom and autonomy.

Schein has suggested that although other career anchors may exist he has not discovered them in his research so far. Through an iterative process between faculty at Purdue and MIT, three other logical career orientations were originally introduced to measure the independence and inclusivity of Schein's five career anchors. Three possible career drives are: (1) identity--people who seek status and the prestige of working for a large organization are "identity" oriented, (2) service--individuals who are "service" oriented are concerned with seeing people change because of their efforts, (3) variety--individuals who desire an endless number of different types of challenges are "variety" oriented.

Through the use of a more empirical approach this investigator discovered that indeed three other career variables do exist. Thus, rather than five career drives existing, eight career orientations seem central to the career decision making process of individuals. More importantly, the questionnaire which was developed to measure the eight aforementioned career orientations has high reliability and validity with educators.

Currently, a number of graduate studies at MIT are focusing on an orientation based on "lifestyle" decisions. Thus, there are possibilities

for other career orientations. It is imperative to make the distinction between Schein's anchor model and the career orientation concept. Schein emphasized that self perceived talents (discovered through work experience) along with values and needs make up ones career anchor. The Career orientation concept (measured by the Career Orientations Inventory) only focuses on values and needs. The questionnaire does not measure self perceived talents. The process of identifying ones self perceived talents is typically done through an interview approach.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Development. The questionnaire was developed through an iterative process by the investigator and Schein. The first section of the questionnaire was designed to collect demographic information. The second section of the questionnaire was designed to collect data on five career anchors (security, technical/functional competence, managerial competence, creativity, and autonomy) and the three career drives (identity, service and variety).

Four-point Likert-type scale items were used in the second section. Items were created to collect data on each of the five career anchor variables and three career drive variables. An example of each of the eight career variables follows:

1. Managerial competence: To be in a position of leadership and influence is important to me.
2. Technical functional expertise: I would leave my company rather than be promoted out of my area of expertise.
3. Security: I prefer to work for an organization which will permit me to remain in one geographical area.

4. Autonomy: During my career I have been mainly concerned with my own sense of freedom and antonomy.
5. Creativity: I have been motivated throughout my career by the number of ideas or products which I have been directly involved in creating.
6. Identity: Being identified with and gaining status from my occupation is important to me.
7. Variety: An endless variety of challenges in my career is important to me.
8. Service: The use of my interpersonal and helping skills in the service of others is important to me.

The items for each variable were written to assess the degree to which the conditions described in the statement were important to the respondents. The response 1 indicated of no importance and 4 indicated centrally important.

The other items for each variable were written to assess the degree to which the conditions described in the statement were true for the respondents. In this case, response 1 signified not true and 4 signified completely true.

The items were assembled in two separate scales according to the response requirements. The order of the items in both scales were determined on a random basis. Finally, the two scales were combined to create one 38-item career scale.

SAMPLE

After testing and retesting the questionnaire on many samples using various factor analytic statistical approaches, the instrument was given to 153 rural educators based in eastern-central Utah. Both elementary

and secondary teachers were administered the questionnaire. The age range of the respondents was 22 years of age to 61 years of age. Ninety-four men and sixty-four women responded to the instrument.

RESULTS

Using a factor analytic approach to ascertain the internal validity of the questionnaire, the results indicate that the individual items designed to measure the eight career orientations, for the most part, clustered together. One major exception was observed. For the "security" variable, the analysis suggests that the items are measuring two different security variables: (1) Two items emphasized the part of security which concerns itself with remaining in a certain geographical location as opposed to moving employment location and (2) Another factor has high coefficients which corresponded to items emphasizing stability, benefits, and good retirement.

Each respondent received an individual score for each of the career orientations. Once the 153 respondents had eight career concept variables, the second factor analysis was used to determine which of the eight career drive variables clustered together. The results of the second factor analysis are found in Table I.

TABLE I: Breakdown of the eight career variables into two major factors.

Career Variables	Factor I	Factor 2
Service	0.33899	0.57299*
Managerial Competence	0.76084*	0.04332
Autonomy	0.65138*	0.05161
Variety	0.62434*	0.31676
Security	-0.19711	0.73775*
Creativity	0.58356*	-0.21636
Technical Competence	-0.02900	0.76565*
Identity	0.45728	0.53851

*Coefficients which cluster together.

DISCUSSION

Using the Career Orientations Inventory two main groups of teachers factored together using the sample of 153 rural educators. Table I indicated that in the first grouping teachers who value managerial activities, autonomy, variety, and to a lesser degree creativity, clustered together. The second major grouping consisted of security and technical competence as essential career orientations.

It is important to emphasize that two career orientations have relatively high coefficients under both groupings. Identity and service as orientations are career concepts which seem important to both groups of rural teachers.

The first grouping of educators under factor one (managerial competence, autonomy, variety, and creativity) seem to be interested in a multifaceted approach to teaching. Some teachers within this group value administration and supervising other teachers. Group one would also be more comfortable in organizing others and creating rules rather than following others. Many teachers who find themselves getting bored easily would fall into this group. Also, teachers who have a tendency to use a myriad of teaching methods would find creativity and autonomy as their central orientations.

Finally, group one with autonomy as a central theme, would have more confidence in leaving the teaching profession than those who had security as their orientation. The investigator supposes that those who relate with the more autonomous group one terminate and exit the educational sector more than those in group two.

The second major grouping have technical competence and security as their central career orientations. These educators find great satisfaction in being competent in their respective disciplines. They find careeer satisfaction in knowing that others see them as excellent teachers.

The career orientation of security is complex yet worth understanding. Many educators find security in belonging to a large organization, collecting long term benefits, having stable working conditions, etc. Another group of teachers find security in the particular geographical region in which they live. Those teachers falling into group two valued both the security of receiving long term benefits and living in a rural geographical area.

The following quote represents one teacher who saw security as his central career value:

> "I remain in teaching because it allows me to live where I want to live. The most important thing in my life other than my family is the location of my home. I will never leave this valley."

The career orientations of identity (being identified as a professional educator) and service (seeing others change because of the teacher's efforts) are valued by both groups. However, group two (technically oriented and security oriented teachers) seem to be more service oriented than group one. It is critical to note that both groups see helping others as central to their responsibilities as teachers.

The dichotomy between teacher orientations pointed out by the data is rather clear. The analysis suggests the managerial interests and technical competence interests are on the polar extremes of teacher career orientations. Those teachers primarily interested in areas of management in the field of education have less interest in becoming experts in one specific area.

It is rather clear educational organizations need to appreciate differences between teachers. Perhaps those rural teachers who are leaving the field of education are doing so because there is a bad match between their career orientation and job definition. Teachers need to have more assistance in career planning so that a compatible match between individual and organizational needs may exist.

The career orientation approach may prove useful as educators attempt to find greater insights into why they make the career decisions they do. The individual who experiences organizational pressures which run contrary to his/her career orientation may find increased dissatisfaction not only at work but with the total life experience. Teachers

who are experiencing job dissatisfaction may transfer this frustration to their students. One of the central issues is whether educational organizations have enough flexibility to meet the needs of individuals who have varying career orientations. Neither individual satisfaction nor organizational effectiveness can be achieved if a strategy does not exist to meet those needs.

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